



NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
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Experts to share knowledge with professionals at opioid symposium

BISMARCK, N.D. – National, regional, and state experts will share information about best practices for safe and effective opioid prescribing, treatment, and overdose response on Aug. 15 in Fargo and again on Aug. 16 in Bismarck as part of the Stop Overdose: Opioid Symposium for Professionals.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., and identical sessions are scheduled from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at each training site. A flyer with location and other details is online at <https://prevention.nd.gov/sites/default/files/OpioidSymposiumFlyer.pdf>.

Experts and other special guests include:

Erin Winstanley, Ph.D., a nationally-recognized researcher and expert on overdose prevention and evidence-based treatment of opioid disorders who is also the director of health services research at Mercy Health in Ohio and a faculty member at the University of Cincinnati. She will provide an overview of opioids, discuss addiction dynamics, and neonatal abstinence syndrome from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m.

At 10:15 a.m., Dr. Andrew McLean, Medical Director of the North Dakota Department of Human Services and chair of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, will be the lead speaker on best practices for safe and effective opioid prescribing. Dr. McLean will be joined by Mark Hardy, PharmD., from the North Dakota Board of Pharmacy, and other health system representatives who will address legal and liability considerations, prescribing practices at several health systems, alternative therapies for pain management, and North Dakota's prescription drug monitoring program.

After lunch, participants will learn about naloxone, an evidence-based overdose response strategy and guidelines for administering it, standing orders in correctional, residential, and health care settings, North Dakota Board of Pharmacy guideline changes, legislative changes, and legal and liability considerations.

Effective treatment and recovery practices will be discussed between 2:15 and 3:30 p.m. and 3:45 and 4:15 p.m. Sessions will include Dr. Melissa Henke, Medical Director of Heartview Foundation and staff psychiatrist for Sanford Health System in Bismarck. She will be joined by Nick Stavros of Community Medical Services, who will talk about his organization's opioid treatment and recovery services, and Kurt Snyder, of Heartview Foundation who will discuss developments in providing treatment and recovery services.

Other featured symposium participants include U.S. Senators John Hoeven and Heidi Heitkamp, Lt. Gov. Drew Wrigley, Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem, pharmacist Sen. Howard Anderson, emergency medical services and law enforcement professionals, and individuals in recovery.

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Winstanley will lead the closing discussion on community prevention, next steps, what professionals can take back to their communities, and special considerations.

Symposium training is offered at no-cost to professionals on Aug. 15, at Fargo's Holiday Inn, Harvest Room, and on Aug. 16, at the Bismarck Event Center, Prairie Rose Room 101-106.

About 450 professionals are registered to attend the symposium, which is sponsored by the North Dakota Department of Human Services' Behavioral Health Division and the Reducing Pharmaceutical Narcotics Task Force, as part of the state's Stop Overdose campaign.

Continuing education credits are available for these professionals: licensed marriage family therapists, licensed addiction counselors, licensed professional counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses, peace officers, and attorneys. Pharmacist credits are pending.

Experts may be available to visit with members of the media from 8:30 to 9 a.m., immediately following their presentations, and during scheduled breaks from 2 to 2:15 p.m., and as arranged.

For more details, visit <https://prevention.nd.gov/stopoverdose>, or contact the department's Behavioral Health Division at 701-328-8920, 800-755-2719, or dhsbhddiv@nd.gov.

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